

Coins

Proof sets, north of the border

By Roger Boye

HERE are some of the questions I have received from readers in the past week:

● Q.—I have the address for ordering United States proof sets. But does the Canadian government also make proof sets? If so, where could they be ordered?—D. G., Skokie

A.—The Royal Canadian Mint produces sets containing six uncirculated coins in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25, 50 cents, and a dollar. The coins in these so-called prooflike sets are of superior quality to normal uncirculated coins.

The address for ordering is Coins Uncirculated, P. O.

Box 470, Ottawa, Ont. K 1N 3S5, Canada. The cost per set is \$5, and the order must contain full payment. There is no limit on the number of sets which can be ordered.

● Q.—What exactly is a "blue" Eisenhower dollar or a "blue Ike"? Coin dealers always give me a senseless answer—S. B., Calumet City

A.—The reference is to an uncirculated Eisenhower dollar coin containing 40 per cent silver. Eisenhower dollars containing silver are produced especially for collectors, and the uncirculated specimens are sold by the U. S. Mint in blue packages.

Incidentally, the Eisenhower dollars produced for circulation are of the copper-nickel clad composition.

● Q.—Sometime ago you mentioned that half-dollars minted between 1965 and 1970 were worth 70 cents. Does this situation still exist?—L. G., Chicago

A.—Most dealers will still pay from 65 cents to 70 cents for half-dollars dated from 1965 to 1970. The price depends on the current price of silver bullion, since these half-dollars contain 40 per cent silver.

One of the coins, a 1970-D [for Denver Mint], is worth considerably more than 70 cents however. Coin dealers sell an uncirculated specimen for \$17 or more. Only 2.15 million 1970-D half-dollars were minted [compared with 302.1 million made at the Denver Mint in 1971],

making them a semiscarce collector's item.

● Q.—Two years ago I came into possession of a \$100 bill which I first thought to be counterfeit. I checked with the local bank, and they indicated that the bill was "real." It is from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, series of 1934. Is the bill worth more than \$100?

A.—Catalogs list this note, signed by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. and Treasurer of the United States W. A. Julian, as selling for \$150 in very fine condition. But you would have trouble selling your bill to a dealer for much more than \$100. Few people collect \$100 bills, and there is little collector demand for most of them.